- 1 and also best realize the opportunities presented by
- 2 those technologies.
- 3 It is interesting that engineers sometimes
- 4 make very good attorneys, largely because the though
- 5 process of engineering and law can be very similar in
- 6 terms of problem solving.
- 7 Unfortunately, I think all to often when we
- 8 are designing regulatory regimes we sort of forget
- 9 that when you are going through an engineering process
- 10 you define the problem, you define the solution, you
- 11 see if the solution works and you go back and you
- 12 change it if it doesn't so you can reach the goal of
- 13 actually answering the question you started from.
- 14 All too often in the regulatory space,
- 15 unfortunately, you end up defining the problem,
- 16 somebody figures out okay, well we'll just regulate it
- 17 this way, or we'll have this program.
- 18 And then by the time you get around to
- 19 figuring out whether or not that program has actually
- 20 worked, or whether that solution has actually worked,
- 21 you are two or three years down the road.
- 22 And if it's not working, it's extremely
- 23 difficult to actually change it to make it work. So,
- 24 getting it right at the beginning is extremely
- 25 important, and also being willing down the road to be

1	flexible	in	the	approach	and	adopt	new	solutions	as
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- 2 they come up is also very important.
- 3 So I'm extremely excited that we have the
- 4 speakers that we have today on the panel. I think we
- 5 really do have a panel that represents perhaps an
- 6 aggregate of over 100 years of experience in this
- 7 field, which is not individually, but, you know, each
- 8 one adds up.
- 9 And I think you will find that the speakers
- 10 have an enormous wealth of experience to share with us
- 11 today. We are going to start with comments from Ed
- 12 Bosson, who is widely regarded as the father of video
- 13 relay service.
- 14 He has been the relay Texas administrator
- 15 since 1990. In this capacity he manages the relay and
- 16 associated expenses for the state of Texas. He has
- 17 won numerous awards for his efforts in this area,
- 18 including awards from the Texas Associated of Deaf
- 19 Recognition Award, the Robert H. Weitbrecht
- 20 Telecommunication Access Award from Telecommunication
- 21 for the Deaf Inc.
- He has also received TDI's 30th Anniversary
- 23 Recognition Award where he was recognized as one of
- 24 the 30 individuals who have produced the greatest
- 25 impact on telecommunications accessibility for

1	America's	deaf	and	hard-of-hearing	citizens.	So	Т
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- 2 welcome Mr. Bosson into the panel.
- 3 MR. BOSSON: Thank you. We will be talking
- 4 about the impact of network services on VRS. As a
- 5 result of the internet relay and VRS, there has been a
- 6 paradigm shift that I would like to share with you.
- 7 Obviously, TTY users are now migrating to
- 8 VRS and internet relay services, and the call volume
- 9 of traditional relay services has either plateued or
- 10 decreased as a result of this migration.
- 11 TRS, traditional relay services, are now
- 12 rethinking how to define their services because of
- 13 what's going on in the internet services provided.
- 14 And those internet services have provided challenges
- 15 to meeting the TRS guidelines.
- 16 Functional equivalency, I know it's been
- 17 discussed and analyzed, and rediscussed, but I'd like
- 18 to really emphasize that functional equivalency should
- 19 be based on the senses and how those services are
- 20 accessed via the sense.
- 21 Hearing people use a telephone with a voice
- 22 and hearing. And that gives them access very easily.
- 23 Deaf people use sight as their sense of communication
- 24 access.
- 25 And so they depend on sign language and that

- 1 visual access. So the different services we have,
- 2 like VRS, it isn't a Cadillac for deaf people, it's
- 3 really just a basic service that provides functional
- 4 equivalency to that which is already out there for
- 5 other users.
- 6 Also, these new changes are affecting
- 7 interpreters. Interpreters used to have to go from
- 8 place to place to do their work and interpret for
- 9 people.
- 10 But now interpreters are taking on desk-
- 11 bound work. Many interpreters never predicted that
- 12 would happen to their industry. But it is happening
- 13 as they work in VRS call centers.
- 14 More and more deaf people are having access
- 15 to computers in their homes. And so they are using
- 16 internet relay and video relay services. And it is
- 17 making it easier for them to communicate.
- And they are not using TTYs anymore. And we
- 19 have already seen several deaf people talk about how
- 20 TTYs are, you know, being thrown out and land lines
- 21 are being cut off, that they are focused on only the
- 22 internet services that they are able to access at this
- 23 time.
- 24 Internet services will require different
- 25 rules and regulations. Average speed of answer is one

1	that	that's	being	affected,	you	know.	We	need	to
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- 2 determine how quick it needs to be answered, you know.
- 3 The different internet speeds that people
- 4 are connecting with, you know. So the regulations
- 5 need to come up with a fair result of, you know, cost
- 6 of service and quick speed of answer.
- 7 Also identifying callers, the originating
- 8 caller and the terminating caller, how to identify
- 9 callers. Should that be required? Or should that be
- 10 a service that isn't required anymore?
- 11 Should the regulations require internet
- 12 capable services have logins and password protection
- 13 to minimize some of the fraud cases that we are now
- 14 experiencing?
- The question has come up about the funding
- 16 source for those internet services. Should they be
- 17 moved back to the state level or maintained at the
- 18 Federal level?
- 19 I'd like to really emphasize that the funds
- 20 are collected -- the money is collected from the
- 21 carriers. And the carriers collect from the rate
- 22 payers.
- 23 And so really, in essence, whatever we call
- 24 it, the rose is still going to smell the same. Okay?
- 25 Whether it is Federal or State. On that basis I

- 1 believe the Federal Government should study which
- 2 would be the most cost-effective and the most
- 3 accessible, provide the most access and be the most
- 4 fair, not only to the phone companies, but to the rate
- 5 payers.
- 6 Because those are the people who are
- 7 ultimately paying for this service. So if we looked
- 8 at it on a Federal sponsorship level, I would
- 9 encourage the FCC to look into Federal funding support
- 10 for internet relay and VRS completely.
- 11 I think it is more cost effective. It will
- 12 distribute the costs more evenly to all of the
- 13 carriers, and as a result of that to all of the rate
- 14 payers.
- 15 All of the payments that they make will be
- 16 equalized. If it was pushed onto the states that they
- 17 had to pay for internet and VRS services, competition
- 18 would only happen at the RFP level.
- 19 Vendors tend to hold back new technology and
- 20 new ideas and wait until RFPs come, and they put them
- 21 in, in hopes to win over their competition. So at
- 22 that different level it puts, at the Federal level,
- 23 there's more competition available, rather than
- 24 limiting it to a single source at the state level.
- 25 If it is pushed down to the state level

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- 2 RFP approach normally chooses one vendor for the
- 3 state.
- 4 They establish a contract. And deaf people
- 5 then are limited in the choices that they currently
- 6 experience. Price per minutes depend on the call
- 7 volume histories for those states.
- 8 And in the RFP that get sent out, a vendor
- 9 will look at that state and say well if you have a
- 10 call volume the price per minute will go down. But if
- 11 it's a low call volume then the price goes up per
- 12 minute.
- And so then that cost is pushed back to the
- 14 rate payer, depending on which state you live in. If
- 15 the states did decide to go ahead and take a multi-
- 16 vendor approach, the cost would then be much higher
- 17 then if it's done on a Federal level.
- What you see here on the screen, all of
- 19 these new things we have coming up, in itself
- 20 contribute to a reduction of the call volume of
- 21 traditional relay services, which is a good thing,
- 22 actually.
- In conclusion, VRS and IP relay needs to be
- 24 subsidized by the National fund. There should be
- 25 special regulations that are separate from traditional

1	relav	service	regulations	because	of	internet

- 2 accessibility.
- 3 It's not unlike what the FFC is doing right
- 4 now with VoIP, developing new regulations and new
- 5 protocols. The same thing needs to happen with
- 6 internet relay and VRS services conducted over the
- 7 internet.
- 8 Functional equivalency needs to be taken a
- 9 hard look at and redefine functional equivalency. It
- 10 needs to be redefined in a way that will be more fair
- 11 to deaf people. Thank you very much.
- MR. CARLISLE: All right, our next panelist
- 13 is Dr. Paul Michaelis, who is a consulting member of
- 14 the technical staff in Avaya Labs, and an adjunct
- 15 professor in the Cognitive Science Institute at the
- 16 University of Colorado in Boulder.
- 17 He is the inventor, or co-inventor, of many
- 18 Avaya accessibility solutions. He currently has over
- 19 15 patents, or patents pending in this area. He is
- 20 the recipient of the Access Innovation Award from the
- 21 Association of Access Engineering Specialists for his
- 22 development of the TTY user interface for the Intuity
- 23 messaging system.
- 24 He was a member of the Lucent Intellectual
- 25 Property Board of Advisors, and a distinguished member

- 2 very pleased to have him with us here today.
- 3 MR. MICHAELIS: Thank you. And also I would
- 4 like to thank everyone for inviting Avaya to speak
- 5 about regulatory considerations. In most cases we
- 6 prefer to rely on market forces to guide our decisions
- 7 about the products we should offer.
- 8 However, with regard to VoIP systems and
- 9 services, it is clear that market forces alone will
- 10 not protect the rights of individuals with
- 11 disabilities.
- The history of our Intuity voice-mail system
- 13 may illustrate why we believe that some form of
- 14 regulation is essential. In 1993 I helped design and
- 15 build the TTY user interface for this system.
- 16 A key feature is that callers may select
- 17 whether they wish to be prompted by voice or in TTY
- 18 format. This means, of course, you can give the same
- 19 phone number to voice and TTY callers.
- 20 Regardless of the prompting format, callers
- 21 may leave voice or TTY messages. This TTY interface
- 22 is a standard feature in the Intuity system. It is
- 23 not an add-on, there is no license fee, there is no
- 24 right-to-use fee.
- The only thing a system administrator needs

- 1 to do is turn it on. Now, despite these efforts to
- 2 encourage accessibility, we are finding that the vast
- 3 majority of Intuity systems do not have TTY support
- 4 activated.
- 5 It is clear that many organizations do not
- 6 understand the need to provide accessible
- 7 communication to their employees and to their
- 8 customers.
- 9 In this environment we cannot expect that
- 10 market pressures alone will ensure that VoIP systems
- 11 are accessible. Before I discuss regulations that may
- 12 be appropriate and beneficial, I think it's important
- 13 to describe a few technical differences between
- 14 traditional phone systems and VoIP.
- 15 When you have an active call on a standard
- 16 residential telephone, all transmissions are carried
- 17 on a single audio channel. This would include your
- 18 voice, as well as touch tones and modem signals.
- Many assistive devices, notably TTYs, rely
- 20 on the phone system's ability to transmit audio
- 21 information reliably and without distortion. In the
- 22 present regulatory environment, VoIP audio channels
- 23 are not required to support reliable TTY
- 24 communication.
- 25 This is a problem because the voice

1	optimized	audio	compression	commonly	used	in	Voll
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- 2 systems can decrease TTY accuracy to the point it
- 3 becomes unusable.
- 4 An exciting aspect of VoIP technology is
- 5 that even while a call is in progress, all sorts of
- 6 non-audio information may be transmitted via parallel
- 7 data channels.
- 8 Avaya is already using this capability to
- 9 provide reliable transport of Baudot TTY signals on
- 10 VoIP-wide area networks. So rather than transmit the
- 11 TTY tones via the voice channel, a description of the
- 12 tones is sent via a parallel data channel, the
- 13 receiving system reconstructs the original audio tones
- 14 for the TTY device at the far end.
- And, for the benefit of any engineers in the
- 16 audience, these descriptions are in the format
- 17 specified by RFC 2833, and are sent redundantly to
- 18 compensate for packet loss.
- 19 It works beautifully. The mechanism I just
- 20 described brings our voice systems up to parody with
- 21 traditional phone systems. VoIP technology allows us
- 22 to considerably more.
- 23 A good example of software for Avaya IP
- 24 telephones is provided by Avaya for free called
- 25 Universal Access Phone Status. It takes advantage of

- 1 capabilities that are present in our IP telephones to
- 2 provide, via voice output, all of the information that
- 3 is presented visually to sighted users, such as which
- 4 lines are available, which are in use, whether the
- 5 phone is forwarded, whether there is new voice-mail,
- 6 whether someone on hold has been disconnected.
- 7 In fact, over 200 different functions are
- 8 supported by this product. My flow of the time, here
- 9 are three high level recommendations regarding
- 10 regulatory control of VoIP.
- 11 First, regardless of how the FCC eventually
- 12 comes out on the issue of is VoIP a telecom or an
- 13 information service, Avaya supports the idea that, at
- 14 a minimum, the current accessibility requirements for
- 15 traditional phone systems should be applied to VoIP.
- 16 In addition, we would like these regulations
- 17 implemented at the Federal level, so that
- 18 manufacturers won't have to deal with multiple
- 19 standards and regulations that may be developed by the
- 20 individual states.
- 21 Second, we believe that a barrier might
- 22 develop between VoIP users and the users of
- 23 traditional systems if interoperability and backward
- 24 compatibility are not required.
- I regard my third point as really being the

- 1 most important. We believe that if accessible VoIP
- 2 systems cost more than their inaccessible equivalents,
- 3 the FCC may be unable to guarantee the rights of
- 4 people with disabilities regardless of whether VoIP
- 5 regulations are adopted.
- 6 Previous statements from the FCC demonstrate
- 7 that they have been reluctant, and appropriately so in
- 8 my opinion, to require capabilities that are not
- 9 readily achievable.
- 10 A key component of how the FCC defines
- 11 readily achievable takes into account the cost of the
- 12 incremental action. Now, the accessibility solutions
- 13 I have described today are included in our products
- 14 without additional charges or fees.
- 15 This was a priority for us during the design
- 16 process. And we were able to achieve this by taking
- 17 advantage of capabilities that were actually already
- 18 present in our systems.
- 19 For example, the TTY on IP solution uses a
- 20 mechanism that was implemented originally to transmit
- 21 touch-tones on the internet. The TTY messaging system
- 22 I described to you uses a software that was
- 23 implemented originally to support multi-lingual spoken
- 24 announcement sets.
- 25 How, this style of engineering, which we try

1 to	piggy-back	inexpensively	onto	existing
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- 2 capabilities, has a very important objective. Now,
- 3 keep in mind, the cost component and how the phrase
- 4 readily achievable is defined.
- 5 We believe that if accessible systems cost
- 6 more than inaccessible equivalents this could lead to
- 7 discrimination of the provision of services and
- 8 opportunities for employment in organizations that are
- 9 unable to or unwilling to cover the extra expense.
- 10 By reusing capabilities that were already
- 11 present in our systems, we are providing accessible
- 12 solutions for VoIP that are, by definition, readily
- 13 achievable.
- 14 Now, realistically, it is not always
- 15 possible to include accessibility within a standard
- 16 product for no additional charge. However, one thing
- 17 you can count on is that Avaya will always try.
- 18 Going forward, we look forward to working
- 19 with the FCC and with the community in general to
- 20 ensure that everyone's needs are respected and
- 21 accommodated. Thank you.
- MR. CARLISLE: Thank you very much Paul.
- 23 Our next panelist is Paul Schroeder who serves as the
- 24 Vice President of Policy Research and Technology for
- 25 the American Foundation for the Blind.

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demographic trends and efforts to improve access and

- 4 information concerning technology.
- 5 He has been directly responsible for a
- 6 number of significant developments, including helping
- 7 to negotiate disability access language during the
- 8 1996 Telecom Act.

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- 9 He has been a leading advocate in the effort
- 10 to enact legislation that would improve access to text
- 11 books for students who are blind or visually impaired.
- 12 And he has also been a leading voice in AFB's work to
- 13 foster a greater access to cell phones and other
- 14 telecommunications equipment. Paul, thank you very
- 15 much for being with us.
- 16 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, very much. And
- 17 good afternoon. I want to observe that so far we have
- 18 all been very nice and behaved. And I will try to
- 19 keep to that.
- 20 I think it's kind of a suit and necktie
- 21 phenomena that we are all kind of constrained from
- 22 speaking perhaps directly. And I want to compliment
- 23 Jim Tobias for A, not having a necktie, and B, being
- 24 fairly provocative in some of his comments.
- 25 And I thought they were very well chosen.

- 1 And those of you who may have missed it, especially
- 2 those listening on the web, check him out. They were
- 3 good comments.
- 4 It's interesting that we saved the
- 5 regulatory portion to last, and appropriately so. I
- 6 think it's good that we've been able to talk about
- 7 some of the other issues, including some of the great
- 8 benefits that come from IP-enabled services.
- 9 I want to make a couple of observations.
- 10 But first of all I want to commend the Commission for
- 11 an excellent notice of conveying your usual breadth
- 12 and depth of analysis.
- Those of you who have maybe been daunted by
- 14 its length or its topic, please read it. It's really
- 15 tremendous. It's a great read. The layering
- 16 discussion alone is almost Dostoevsky in tone.
- 17 You will enjoy it. It will be in literary
- 18 classes next year I'm sure. It is a good notice. And
- 19 I do commend it. We have heard a lot today about
- 20 Voice Over IP.
- 21 And I want to express a concern that we are
- 22 really talking about something far deeper and more
- 23 significant in a way than that. Voice Over IP fits
- 24 fairly well within the current telecom structure.
- I think we can debate and argue over how it

1 should be deemed in the regulatory scheme. But	1	shou⊥d	be	deemed	in	the	requlatory	scheme.	But	
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- 2 think we could probably come down and agree that it's
- 3 a telecom service and should be treated as such.
- 4 IP-enabled services are far more
- 5 significant, and really have to be treated
- 6 differently. And that's one of the things I want to
- 7 talk about.
- 8 How do we ensure that people with
- 9 disabilities have reliable access to these IP services
- 10 with all that comes with them? Well it should be no
- 11 surprise to anyone here that I'm going to advocate,
- 12 yes, regulations, to ensure reliable access for people
- 13 with disabilities.
- 14 Voluntary measures and market forces simply
- 15 don't work. Everybody wants them to work. Everybody
- 16 says they should work. Everybody hopes they will
- 17 work.
- 18 But they simply don't work for people with
- 19 disabilities. So, even though we might say it over
- 20 and over again, it isn't true. It hasn't been true,
- 21 and I doubt for the foreseeable future that it will be
- 22 true.
- The reason for that is fairly simply. We
- 24 simply don't have the sufficient focused power in the
- 25 marketplace to ensure that services will meet our

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- 2 So it seems to me the role of government.
- 3 and in this case the FCC, is to ensure a reliable
- 4 opportunity for equal access, albeit with minimal
- 5 intrusion.
- 6 Striking that balance is the critical task
- 7 confronting the Commission. I think we have a
- 8 historic moment to try to construct the right
- 9 regulatory approach that meets the needs of consumers
- 10 with disabilities, rather than trying to shoehorn us
- 11 into the unrelated legacy approaches of the past.
- Of course I'm referring here to the computer
- 13 inquiry lines of reasoning, and to the economic-based
- 14 regulatory scheme that we have been living within.
- 15 Whatever the flaws of the latter, the economic scheme,
- 16 might be, certainly it has served important interest,
- 17 especially in constraining the abuses that might arise
- 18 for monopoly power.
- 19 But even in a non-monopoly condition, people
- 20 with disabilities still do not have the power to
- 21 negotiate the rates, the terms, and conditions that
- 22 affect our access to services.
- 23 With respect to the computer inquiry
- 24 decisions, one wishes we could have been around 40
- 25 years ago to try to steer things in a different

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- Nonetheless, most of us weren't, maybe a
- 3 couple exceptions on this table since we've got a
- 4 hundred years of service. We have said several times
- 5 in our responses to notices here at the FCC, we have
- 6 asked the FCC to try to go beyond, to try to move past
- 7 the separation of basic and enhanced or telecom and
- 8 information services that arose from the computer
- 9 inquiry.
- 10 We've said that in our comments on the
- 11 further notice of inquiry, Section 255, and we've also
- 12 made the same point in talking about broadband
- 13 services.
- Obviously the analysis in the notice that
- 15 Commission has published also points out that there is
- 16 a rich communication environment, and an environment
- 17 that does go well beyond the division of telecom and
- 18 if services.
- 19 Nonetheless, I have to say at the heart of
- 20 the discussion of regulatory schemes in the Federal
- 21 Communications Commission notice, and in the comments
- 22 here this afternoon, we have continued to focus on
- 23 voice and made analogies to traditional voice
- 24 telephony.
- We have to move beyond the focus on voice.

- 1 And we have to get to a focus on the message, on the
- 2 content, for it is the communication of that content
- 3 that really is essential.
- 4 Yes, the transmission of voice is important,
- 5 and it does need to be protected in terms of
- 6 accessibility. But so many other forms of content
- 7 described in the notice, and talked about in terms of
- 8 the IP environment that we are now in, are of great
- 9 significance to people with disabilities, and are
- 10 simply not being made accessible.
- I have no doubt that the marketplace will
- 12 ensure a wide panoply of services and products for
- 13 consumers. And I have no doubt that those providing
- 14 those services will find a way to make money.
- But experience tells us that the needs of
- 16 people with disabilities, if thought of at all, will
- 17 be addressed as afterthoughts, retrofits, and
- 18 incomplete and inferior approaches.
- We are not looking for an imposed solution.
- 20 Nor do we want to be bought off with a scheme that
- 21 says special devices for special people. So, how do
- 22 we ensure that people with disabilities can take equal
- 23 advantage of these new communications services?
- 24 Well, I'm going to say that I think Section
- 25 255 of the Communications Act actually offers the

- 1 right starting point. Yes, it does bear the struggles
- 2 of having been written with a telecom and information
- 3 services distinctions in place.
- 4 But it addresses the needs of consumers by
- 5 addressing access to both equipment and
- 6 telecommunications services. And it sets user
- 7 interface standards.
- 8 Section 255 addresses that all important
- 9 human interface to communications. Regardless of
- 10 whether we are describing a traditional telephone, or
- 11 whether we are describing something that, in fact,
- 12 uses enhanced technologies.
- I am convinced that standards can be set to
- 14 require access to IP-enabled services, that we can
- 15 look at end-user devices, those used by the consumers
- 16 in their home or on their person, the controllers of
- 17 those devices, be they personal computers, handheld
- 18 devices or otherwise, the software that runs those
- 19 services, the electronic services, such as the web-
- 20 bases services that allow individuals to interact.
- 21 And, of course, we can ensure that the
- 22 communication protocols are open so that consumers can
- 23 connect at will. But, as I said, 255 is limited by
- 24 its applications to telecommunications and, frankly,
- 25 its neglect in the enforcement here at the Federal

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- 2 Unfortunately, our hopes have not been
- 3 realized. But I believe that the breadth and approach
- 4 of 255 remains right. We've gone nearly this time --
- 5 and I'm closing up here -- without using the term
- 6 ancillary jurisdiction.
- 7 And I can't believe we have gone a whole
- 8 morning without saying that. It's the right
- 9 regulatory edifice on which to build a 255-like
- 10 approach to ensure broad access to IP communications
- 11 and technologies for people with disabilities.
- MR. CARLISLE: We'd like to get people
- 13 warmed up for a while before we actually start
- 14 throwing around ancillary jurisdiction. By the way,
- 15 thank you very much.
- That's the first time I've ever heard a,
- 17 speaking on behalf of the staff who wrote the NPRM,
- 18 that's first time I've ever heard any part of an FCC
- 19 order referred to as Dostoevskian.
- 20 We usually get Kakkaesque. And it's really
- 21 not that long. It's only about 60 pages long, which
- 22 is actually a pamphlet compared to most of what we do.
- 23 And one more thing, before I take anymore heat on this
- 24 hundred year comment, I'm just going by the bios.
- 25 And Vanderheiden has been in this for 30

- 1 years. Mr. Schroeder has been in it for 20 years from
- 2 his bio, Michaelis for 25, and Mr. Bosson has been
- 3 head since 1990 of the Texas TRS Service, and has
- 4 probably got more experience than that.
- 5 So, you've at least got 89 years by my
- 6 account. So just put that to rest. Our last panelist
- 7 is Dr. Gregg Vanderheiden who we are very happy to
- 8 have again.
- 9 He was on our VoIP forum in December of last
- 10 year, and provided very valuable input on the
- 11 disabilities access issues. So we are very happy to
- 12 have him back again so we can delve into more detail
- 13 in this forum here.
- 14 He is a Professor in Industrial Engineer and
- 15 Biomedical Engineering, and directs the Trace Research
- 16 and Development Center at University of Wisconsin in
- 17 Madison.
- Dr. Vanderheiden has been working in this
- 19 field for, as I mentioned, 30 years. He pioneered the
- 20 field of augmentative communication and assistive
- 21 technology, and for many years has been looking at
- 22 issues for physical and cognitive disabilities.
- 23 He has been involved with computer access
- 24 since the late 1970s. And many access features he has
- 25 developed are present in Mac, UNIX, and Windows

1	operating	systems.
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- 2 He has worked with a wide variety of Federal
- 3 Government agencies, as well as corporations. His
- 4 recent activities focus on cross disability access to
- 5 the full range of communication and information
- 6 technologies.
- 7 He is the co-author of W3C's web content
- 8 accessibility guidelines, various interconnection
- 9 standards, and voting systems that are usable by those
- 10 with disabilities, or elderly.
- 11 Again, we are very happy to have him.
- 12 And, please?
- 13 MR. VANDERHEIDEN: Thank you very much.
- 14 Again, thank you for the invitation and for putting
- 15 together this very excellent panel. Coming last is
- 16 always a dubious distinction.
- 17 And I will try not to plow old ground. But
- 18 I will try to bring some things together and to really
- 19 look at some of the underlying forces that cause
- 20 things to happen or not happen.
- 21 So I ask the question, why would we
- 22 regulate? And the answer is we wouldn't or shouldn't
- 23 unless we have to. So, is this true for Voice Over IP
- 24 and for IP services?
- 25 And let's examine this. One of the things

- 1 we saw was in the telecom area we have seen nothing
- 2 happen regarding accessibility and mainstream
- 3 companies and products until regulation.
- 4 Although there were serendipitous things,
- 5 and there were special programs, sometimes special
- 6 adaptations in special room. But we haven't seen
- 7 anything regarding overall access to the different
- 8 disabilities and the problems they face.
- 9 With regulation, we also saw that nothing
- 10 substantial happened that hasn't been driven by FCC
- 11 enforcement or threat of enforcement. And so when
- 12 that has either relaxed or time has passed, the
- 13 interests and the efforts in the companies can
- 14 actually be seen to slacken and reduce.
- 15 When a complaint is filed, interest,
- 16 activities, funding, and work within the companies
- 17 increases again. Now, is this because the companies
- 18 are bad, or evil?
- 19 And the answer is no. It's complicated, but
- 20 the underlying driving force is that it is not good
- 21 business to do things that do not generate the most
- 22 profit.
- This is a very competitive industry. And
- 24 those who ignore this, the laws of business, they are
- 25 gone, they disappear. And we here who buy stocks --

1	anybody	here	buy	stocks	or	have	a	pension	fund?
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- We want our stocks to generate as much
- 3 return as possible. So if you're like we, the public,
- 4 are the evil owners of these companies that care about
- 5 nothing but profit.
- 6 So profit isn't bad, it's life. It's like
- 7 gravity. If you're old and you fall and you break
- 8 your hip, you kind of curse gravity. But if you
- 9 didn't have gravity you wouldn't have traction, you
- 10 couldn't walk.
- 11 Profits are similar to gravity. They are
- 12 both a fact, and they are what makes things work. We
- 13 ignore gravity at our own peril. We ignore the profit
- 14 motive and its driving and critical force in business,
- 15 at the peril of actually the consumer.
- 16 If we think that things will happen for the
- 17 consumer for any other reason except if they need to,
- 18 then we basically are ignoring gravity. So what does
- 19 this have to do with regulation?
- 20 Regulations are a way of taking important
- 21 things that won't and don't happen by market forces,
- 22 that aren't in the profit equation, and putting them
- 23 into the profit equation.
- 24 Profit is what makes businesses work.
- 25 Regulation is how society, and what society uses to